

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 17, 2021

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
2201 C St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Blinken and Secretary Buttigieg:

We write to you today in strong support of Taiwan and its autonomy in the face of continued military and diplomatic pressure by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). We urge you to continue to fully support Taiwan and uphold the provisions of the *Taiwan Relations Act* as you craft the Administration's East Asia strategy. Specifically, we are concerned about the continued exclusion of Taiwan from the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

Throughout the U.S.-Taiwan relationship, Taipei has proven itself a trusted ally to the United States and a valuable partner in the Indo-Pacific region as we continue to strengthen our stance against the intimidation tactics of Beijing—both in the region and around the world. The United States shares the democratic values of Taiwan, a robust trade partnership, and defensive cooperation to combat communism across the globe.

On January 28, 2021, China's defense ministry spokesman Wu Qian said, "Taiwan independence means war." This is an escalation in both posture and rhetoric by the Chinese Communist Party and one that should be met with equal support from the U.S. for Taiwan's autonomy. Taiwan is a stronghold of democracy and freedom in the region, but Beijing has made it a top priority to bring Taiwan under its fold, as it has to Hong Kong, Tibet, and other freedom-loving governments. With these recent comments, Xi Jinping and the CCP have suggested the possibility of a forceful takeover of the island.

The CCP conducted almost daily aircraft incursions into Taiwan airspace during the month of January, including an incursion of eight aircraft capable of carrying nuclear weapons on January 24, 2021¹. This escalation and overt gesture of force can only be seen as testing U.S. support for Taiwan. We join in demonstrating our continued support for Taiwan and thank you for reaffirming your "rock-solid commitment" to assisting Taiwan in defending itself. We ask that you work to include Taiwan as a member of ICAO in order to promote air travel safety, international cooperation, and logistical planning in the airspace. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the important changes to air travel, excluding Taiwan from those international discussions jeopardizes the health and safety of the people of Taiwan and around the world. This disparity proved true with Taiwan's exclusion from the World Health Organization (WHO),

¹ "Taiwan Reports 'Large Incursion' by Chinese Warplanes for Second Day." BBC News. BBC, January 25, 2021. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-55788359>.

which is an ongoing concern, and we must not allow these issues to continue in airspace diplomacy. Taiwan is home to the eleventh busiest airport in the world, and the country's absence in this organization ignores the public health and safety issues of global air travel.

It is critical that we continue to publicly work with Taiwan and our other allies across the globe in combatting CCP influence in the region and international community, as well as continuing to build our diplomatic and defensive relationships. We are ready to work with your departments to see Taiwan included in the ICAO and the WHO, as well as to build on previous work to ease restrictions that allow us to increase our diplomatic missions to Taiwan. Lastly, we encourage you to continue to work to implement the *Taiwan Relations Act* and similar legislation related to Taiwan.

These steps will reinforce the strength of the U.S.-Taiwan relationship and promote further cooperation between Taiwan and our other allies in the region. We stand ready to work with you on this effort and look forward to protecting the autonomy of a free, democratic Taiwan.

Sincerely,



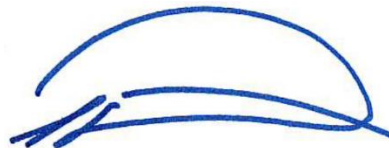
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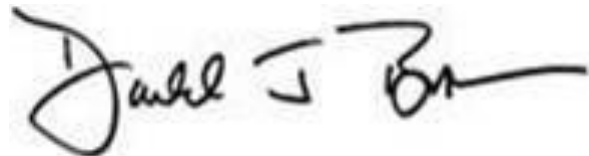
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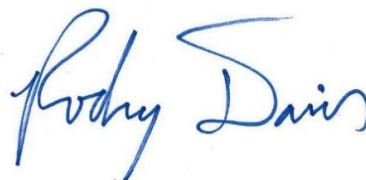
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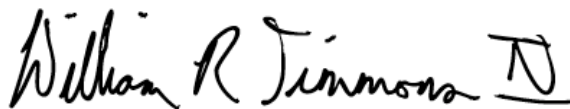
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